

**SWOG  
SAN JUAN  
COUNTY**

Planning/update  
meeting

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**Date:** April 13, 2004

**Time:** 1:00 PM

**Place:** San Juan County Commissioners room

**Members Present;**

Todd Black (USU CCES)

Leroy Mead (DWR)

Steve Madson (UTBLM)

Laura Romin (USFWS)

Doug Christensen (FSA)

Guy Wallace (UDWR)

Tammy Wallace (BLM)

Sharon Ward (USU)

Don Andrews (NRCS)

Jim Keys (USU Ext)

Sherri Liguori (PacifiCorp)

Tim Chervick (Swift Creek Consulting)

**Information Presented**

- Sharon gave update on bird locations through the winter. All the birds returned from winter locations to leking areas. 1 additional adult female caught this spring along with the two juvenile males were caught in fall of 03. Trapping efforts will continue for the next few weeks. Lek counts are similar to last year. One lone male was observed strutting out on Dodge Point this year.
- Wildlife Services took 6 coyotes from the core area and 6 or so others from adjacent areas.
- Leroy—update on planting. BLM (Tammy) purchased 25,000 sagebrush plants and UDWR got a three additional thousand bare root stock which UDWR planted last week. Adams and Hines area on three different spots. Adams was re-planted from last year. UDWR received help from may volunteers, soil conditions were ‘nearly perfect’.
- Guy gave update on new status of the grouse and gave information with regards to other landowners and projects, leases, conservation easements.

- Don Andrews (NRCS)-EQUIP an absentee landowner has requested a spike treatment on a section of ground southeast of hickman flat lek. The surrounding areas and habitat is all PJ. Also re-seeding on Rorings near Bell draw. Clay Pearson's is still waiting for the solar pump to come back. A lot of the older CRP plantings are dead or in bad shape, NRCS is looking at 'interseeding' many of these areas for maintenance.
- BLM—(Tammy/Steve) applied for and received 1.5 million for funding on projects for habitat treatment. They are targeting around 50K for this area; most of this is likely to be spent on bare-root seeding. Oil/Gas people are proposing gas leases on state ground BLM postponed the recommend lease sell until it is re-evaluated. Utah quality growth proposal with TNC made it out for a field trip. The commissioners and representatives unofficially decided to go with the project.
- Tim Chervick (Swift Creek Consulting) gave presentation on raptor perches and fencing issues. Tim gave a handout.
- Sherri Ligouri also gave discussion on some of the things PacifiCorp is doing to trying to use different products to see what works and what doesn't work.

### **Actions Taken**

- Discussion was had on Wildlife Services putting out eggs for raven control. The group decided to have WS hold off of laying out laced eggs until after the nesting season. Mid June
- Group to put out motion sensing cameras on mock nests mid June. Tammy has one—two and Todd has four to uses. Todd/Sharon/Guy and Tammy will coordinate locations and efforts to accomplish this.
- Discussion was held as to the next graduate student and research efforts. Decision was to wait until Terry got back to discuss with Dean/Tammy for funding efforts research needs etc. Possibly discussion at the next meeting or a phone call mid June. BLM (Tammy) put in for additional matching funds and got funding again.

- Group discussed the **candidate review reporting process**. The group decided to follow this out line and have an annual review instead of an every other year review and to use this document for our annual review. The group will discuss this at the next meeting (JULY) and how to divvy up the assignments for the reporting and who will compile this report.
- The group discussed the spike treatment and the possibilities of having input on the treatment and how we go about the treatment. The group needs to have input in the treatment as to intensities area treated and issues with treating the property. Guy/Jim/Leroy and Don to go out and tour the area and make some decisions and recommendations as to treatments, they set a date to go out and tour the area on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April.

- **REPORT ON PROPOSED SPIKE**

**TREATMENT**—the property is on the fringe of the sage grouse habitat, is almost entirely black sagebrush, and is bordered by P-J on the south side. We walked through quite a bit of the property and did not find any evidence of sage grouse use. Use by grouse would most likely occur on the north end of the property but there is very little grass cover between the sagebrush. The habitat quality could definitely be improved by increasing the grass/forb understory. NRCS (Don and Doug) indicated that they would not recommend using spike due to the lack of grass cover and would consider a mechanical treatment (dixie harrow or aeriator). If funding is approved for the project, we agreed to get together and design the treatment area to create a mosaic pattern with large leave areas, particularly on the north end of the property where sage grouse are most likely to utilize. Two concerns discussed about this project was: 1)the adjoining property (Halliday's) has a substantial knapweed problem and disturbance on the project area would allow the knapweed to spread; 2)the property would need to be rested from grazing and then managed more carefully when resumed (it appeared to have been grazed pretty intensively in the past).

Don and Doug felt confident that if buffer strips were left along property border that knapweed invasion would not occur. Don said he would talk to property owners about the

recommended treatment methods and that he would know within a week if the project was approved for funding.

- Discussion was had for the need to re-evaluate the core conservation area to exclude the PJ and ‘cliffy’ areas. Mainly for mineral leases for the BLM in these areas.
- The group decided to meet with PacifiCorp and Swift Creek to design and discuss a proposal to put the bird flappers on the existing transmission lines where raptor discouragers were recently placed. Also to put some of the bird flappers/diverter’s on any new fences going up in the area.

### **Follow-up Needed**

- Todd to mail candidate species review and PEACE standards out to the group.
- Discussion item for next meeting will be how the group will proceed.
- Todd to make sure Laura and Dean are at the next meeting to discuss and give input on issues. 12<sup>th</sup>—16<sup>th</sup>
- Todd to make some additional copies of the original conservation plan.
- Sherri/Todd/Tim to have further discussion on raptor power line proposal.